

# European Labor Party Campaigns For June 20 Elections, Fields Candidates In Sweden And West Germany

**May 29 (NSIPS)** — “For the first time in the history of the working class, there is a party waging class warfare in the electoral field on two continents simultaneously,” Fiorella Operato, head of the European Labor Party in Italy told journalists at a Milan press conference May 22 to kick off the party’s electoral campaign in that city.

In conjunction with the U.S. Labor Party’s Lyndon LaRouche presidential campaign, full Labor Party slates of candidates are now on the boards in both West Germany and Sweden as well as Italy. In West Germany, where voting will not occur until October, the Labor Party is actively campaigning now for 80 federal parliament seats in North Rhine-Westphalia, Hessen, Baden-Wuerttemberg, Hamburg, Bavaria, Bremen, Rheinland-Palatinate, and Lower Saxony. In Sweden, the Labor Party is running candidates for National Parliament and in municipal elections scheduled for September in Malmoe, Gothenburg, and Gaevle, the major industrial centers of northern Europe. In Italy, the Labor Party has launched a full national campaign for the June 20 general elections with 10 candidates for the Italian Chamber of Deputies on the ballot in Turin, Milan, Rome and the contiguous, heavily industrialized districts surrounding those cities.

“The first thing to emphasize is that this is not a Swedish campaign in itself,” said Swedish party chairman, Kerstin Tegin in a May 18 interview. “Besides West Germany and Italy, the electoral campaign of our brother party in the U.S., the U.S. Labor Party, has now entered an explosive stage. Our success in Sweden depends on the extent to which we will be able to bring forward our program in Italy, West Germany and the U.S.” Tegin continued: “A victory for our party in Italy is at the same time, a victory in our effort to dismantle the ‘Swedish Way’ to fascism of Olof Palme, as he institutes it here and as it is exported around the world.”

The Italian elections are the immediate key to the Labor Party’s European strategy. The mass pro-Soviet working class base of the Italian Communist Party (PCI), the hundreds of thousands of Communist workers who have come to hate the renegade pro-NATO PCI leadership of Enrico Berlinguer and Giorgio Amendola, are the immediate target and already broadly recognized strength of the ELP candidacies, but the significance of their campaign extends to influencing the disposition of anti-Atlanticist forces throughout Europe.

In Sweden and West Germany, political industrialists who have periodically associated their interests with a new world economic order, are temporarily bound to a fearful alignment with the pro-Atlanticist (fascism and war) surge of Helmut Schmidt in the West German Chancellory and Swedish Premier Palme. If the French Gaullists who maintain their offensive against the Atlanticist Giscard government are not to be isolated on the continent, much

depends on the activity of Italian anti-Atlanticists associated with the names of industrialist Cefis, Budget Minister Andreotti and Socialist faction leader Giacomo Mancini. It is the ELP electoral offensive around the crucial programmatic issues of dollar debt moratorium and an International Development Bank-based new world economic order that now provides the essential rallying point for this pro-development Italian bourgeoisie.

Testifying to the unprecedented influence which the relatively tiny ELP forces will have on the June election, numbers of Italian bourgeois newspapers, and those linked to the Socialist Party’s Mancini wing and to development-oriented industrialist Eugenio Cefis in particular, have given broad coverage to the ELP campaign and program. Over the past two weeks, such journals as the Mancini-linked Tempo and the Cefis-owned Europeo have published lengthy exposures based on IPS reports, unveiling Rockefeller’s planning and control of the NATO “cold coup” occupation of the earthquake stricken Friuli region, and intentions to spread that militarization to all parts of the nation.

As ELP organizers on May 20 began distribution of 50,000 electoral leaflets and 30,000 posters bearing the party symbol, a modern tractor with the words “No Nazi Austerity,” Italy was deeply embroiled in the worst political crisis in its post-war history. Both of the major parties, the Christian Democracy which has been continuously in power since 1945, and the NATO-led Communist Party which is making a bid for government participation, are being subjected to a CIA-directed wrecking operation aimed at destroying these parties’ social base to clear the way for Rockefeller’s Schachtian “technocratic” dictatorship under Wall Street’s direct control through FIAT magnate Gianni Agnelli. The Christian Democrats, which include many of Italy’s pro-development capitalist forces, have accepted the candidacy of Rockefeller agent Umberto Agnelli of the FIAT dynasty, under the threat that they will otherwise be outdistanced in the voting by the “progressive” Communists. The Communists themselves are avidly engaged in a campaign to demonstrate their commitment to “pluralism” by running a former NATO air force general, Nino Pasti, and a four-decade agent of NATO, Altiero Spinelli of the Common Market Commission as “independents” on the PCI’s national slate!

The ELP now represents the only force in the Italian campaign which can claim true independence of the Lower Manhattan debt-collectors and true commitment to the notion of progress.

### A Serious Candidate

With trembling hatred for the pro-fascist, pro-NATO orientation of the PCI Central Committee and Secretariat — typefied by Berlinguer’s May 20 characterization of the USSR as “resembling fascist countries” — the PCI mem-

bership is now consciously searching for a programmatic and institutional alternative. The point is illustrated by the campaign tour conducted by ELP candidate for parliament Lino Passoni throughout the industrial belt surrounding Milan last weekend. In the towns of Niguarda, Cusano, Cormano-Novate and others, Passoni was continuously surrounded by crowds of hundreds who listened intently to briefings on the collapse of the dollar monetary system and debt moratorium as the alternative to the PCI's austerity drive. Although the ELP had never formerly visited these areas, recognition of the party was everywhere very high. Former PCI voters readily stated that they no longer knew whom to vote for, and were ready to consider an alternative party.

This was particularly true in the heavily Communist town of Cormano-Novate, where nearly all of the hundreds of people who spoke with Passoni and ELP organizers admitted they had not decided for whom to vote. In Niguarda, Passoni briefed up to one thousand people at a time over a megaphone!

One old Communist resistance fighter in this region walked up to an ELP organizer, took his armful of leaflets, shook his hand and walked away without speaking. Everywhere the response of PCI workers (especially) has been: "At last, a serious working class candidate."

The tactic of the ELP election campaigns is based on precisely that sentiment in the pro-revolutionary ranks of the PCI. The 10 candidates who have achieved ballot status cover the areas of Milan-Pavia, Turin-Vercelli-Novara, and Rome-Frosinone-Latina-Viterbo, in all of which, the working class vote in last June's elections was overwhelmingly for the Italian Socialists or the PCI, predominantly the latter. The encompassed areas include the heaviest working class concentrations in the nation, the Turin-Milan industrial corridor with such cities as Grugliasco, Latina Laso, and Sesto San Giovanni, the very centers of PCI membership discontent. Not accidentally, the workers of this area and their fathers organized the first 1943 uprisings of the resistance to fascism. ELP strength is centered in the FIAT, Falk, Breda and other huge factory complexes which are currently seething with discontent over wages, conditions, and political leadership. The programmatic emphasis of the ELP candidates on debt moratorium and development will give simultaneous focus and unity of purpose to strikes and demonstrations spreading throughout these regions.

#### In-Plant Committees

In Turin, home of the FIAT auto giant and the most militant layer of the industrial working class, the ELP campaign is headed by party General Secretary Fiorella Operto and FIAT worker Pino Constantino. In the sprawling FIAT plant itself, the "Elect Pino Committee" is being joined by individual workers who have helped saturate the plant with ELP campaign literature. Plant gate rallies have drawn such support and interest from the workers that police-controlled countergangs and PCI provocateurs enjoying the protection of the Agnellis have been unable to intervene. When one attempted it on May 24, demanding that Operto go to work instead of campaigning, a FIAT worker

responded angrily: "If the ELP members go to work in a factory, what would that solve? They are right, we must have debt moratorium."

In Turin, Milan and Rome, among auto, construction and railroad and other workers, the highest levels of support for the PCI are generally limited to the self-delusion that that party also plans to introduce debt moratorium after entering the government! Where workers as yet still intend a PCI vote, that commitment is based on a commitment to the ELP program hated by the PCI leadership!

#### Major Press Coverage

Overall, 12,000,000 people will be reached directly by the ELP campaigns, 9,000,000 of them voters. It is estimated that the ELP will need to receive at least 500,000 votes to elect one deputy. Italian election law requires 70,000 candidate-specific votes and a certain proportional geographic distribution of those votes to qualify the candidate for a Chamber of Deputies seat. It is also estimated that the POE's chances of achieving at least one victory are excellent.

The bourgeois press has signalled that it shares the ELP prognosis. Press coverage of the campaign in its first week has been extensive, including a libelous column in the PCI's *Unità* newspaper, for which the ELP has the legal right to a published retraction, and the responsible editors face a possible jail term. To date, virtually every major urban and national newspaper and magazine, and a spectrum of less prominent media have devoted coverage to the ELP candidacies.

On May 19, five major Italian dailies, the Catholic paper *Avvenire* and *Il Giorno* of Milan, *Il Messagero* and *Paese Sera* in Rome, and the Milan "newspaper of record" *Corriere della Sera*, highlighted the ELP candidates and their program. *Il Messagero* featured an interview with the leading ELP candidate in Rome, Giuseppe Filippini. After describing the ELP electoral symbol — a tractor with the slogan, No Nazi Austerity — the journalist turned to Filippini and asked: "Why the tractor?" "Because," Filippini replied, "it epitomizes technological evolution from the hammer and sickle, which must go together with the development of society. This," Filippini continued, "is why we propose a debt moratorium against the U.S. financial structure and an International Development Bank." *Il Messagero* then detailed ELP denunciations of Nelson Rockefeller's attempted Italian coup d'etat, and nuclear brinkmanship in the Middle East; they included the observation that NATO "relief" in the Friuli disaster area has achieved "75 per cent of the coup aims."

*Avvenire*, affiliated with the Milanese Church, gave brief coverage to the ELP electoral effort which emphasized the international character of the party and hinted at the catalytic role the party's organizing is playing for the anti-Rockefeller bourgeois forces in Italy. "The ELP situates itself in the international Communist movement. They are associated with the Mexican Labor Party, and with the European Labor party in West Germany. The Americans from the ELP (sic) propose a debt moratorium against the USA," the article reads in one part. Other coverage has included *Corriere d'Informazione*, a second *Il Messagero* article, *Il Giornale*, *La Stampa* of Turin, and even the right-wing Rome daily, *Momento Sera*.

### PCI Attacks Pino and...Agnelli?

ELP attorneys are considering legal pursuit of the PCI leadership in the broad context of illegal harassment which also included the slander of ELP organizers as "terrorists" in a recent edition of a PCI monthly magazine. Most vicious in this campaign, however, has been PCI-directed harassment of Pino Constantino, an ELP candidate in Turin who is a FIAT worker, a CGIL union confederation member, and coordinator of ELP factory cells in that city.

A factory delegate, Fragomini, who works closely with joint goon squads of the PCI and FIAT owner Gianni Agnelli and who may himself be a PCI member, ordered Pino's transfer to the paint department of the plant, termed by the workforce, "the Hell-Hole." The plant, which includes several ELP networks and cells in different departments was suddenly flooded with anti-ELP literature on May 19, not identified as to sponsor and indicative of a much broader covert electoral sabotage effort. Pino himself has been placed on a rapidly rotating work schedule to minimize his organizing effectiveness.

Unfortunately for the PCI leaders and Gianni Agnelli, Italian election law also deals harshly with personal harassment of electoral candidates. Pino's case will become a leading edge of the broad legal counteroffensive the ELP will launch.

An article appearing in the May 21 issue of *Unita* reflected the ELP candidacies' pressure on the PCI leadership in a different fashion. An *Unita* staff writer attacked the Christian Democracy, (DC), Italy's ruling party, for prominently featuring the candidacy of Umberto Agnelli, Gianni's brother, on their electoral slate. Labeling the Agnellis anti-

working class, the article characterized his DC candidacy as a sign of that party's undisguised "degeneracy," the most "Communist-tinged" statement in the modern history of the Berlinguer-Amendola PCI dynasty.

### Swedish Campaign

In Sweden, the Labor Party campaign is focused on the same program essential to the Italian and U.S. drives, and is occurring under conditions of an enormous political vacuum for the working class. "Since Olof Palme became Chairman of the Social Democratic Party in 1968," declared party chairman Kersten Tegin, "That party has lost one third of its voters. The workers can no longer have any illusions that the Social Democracy is their party. They cannot avoid seeing how one corporatist institution after another is built, how the taxes are increased, how their children are being destroyed by the "education" they receive, how the next generation of productive workers is being thereby destroyed. And the Communist Party of Sweden hardly has a single working class member left. How could any worker support their ass-licking of Palme?"

The European Labor Party in Sweden was formally constituted as an electoral party at a May 22-23 conference in Stockholm. Participants came from Copenhagen, Denmark as well as Stockholm, Malmoe, Gothenburg, and Gaevle, representing the heaviest industrial concentrations in northern Europe, inclusive of the Volvo and Saab workforces and the large Kockums shipyards on Malmoe.

"We want to get four per cent of the votes," Ms. Tegin told the conference participants. "We need 250,000 votes to get into parliament. This is something that Palme and his Maoist counter gangs cannot prevent except by fraud."